

Aerospace Education History Events: June

2 June 1943-Film actor, producer and director Leslie Howard dies in a plane crash. Howard was on his way from Lisbon to London and was shot down by the Germans who thought that Winston Churchill was aboard.

2 June 1944-American bombers from the 15th Air Force, commanded by Gen. Carl Spaatz, launch “shuttle bombing” in Operation Frantic. Originally it was named Operation Frantic Joe for the assistance that the 15th Air Force was giving the Red Army in Romania. Later it was shortened to Frantic in order not to offend Stalin.

3 June 1940-The German Luftwaffe bombs Paris, France with the intent on crippling their moral and their economy. The bombing of the capitol was done with much disregard to the fact that most of the victims were civilians and schoolchildren.

3 June 1965-Maj. Edward H. White II becomes the first American to walk in space after stepping out of the Gemini 4 capsule. White was attached to the capsule by a 25 foot tether and his space walk lasted just over 20 minutes.

4 June 1942-The Battle of Midway begins. In this battle the American forces almost completely destroyed the Japanese aircraft carrier fleet, but not without the loss of the American aircraft carrier USS Yorktown. The unique part of the Battle of Midway is that the American or Japanese navies never saw each other’s ships. It was fought entirely by aircraft from both sides.

7 June 1942-The Battle of Midway ends with a decisive victory for America.

13 June 1944-Germans launch 10 of their new V-1 rockets from the Channel coast towards Brittan. Of the 10 rockets launched, five crashed at the launch site, one disappeared all together and only four made it to England.

13 June 1983-After over a decade in space as the world’s first outer planetary probe, Pioneer 10 leaves the solar system to relay data on interstellar space.

14 June 1985-TWA Flight 847 is high-jacked by terrorists and forced to land at the Beirut Airport in Lebanon.

15 June 1965-As part of Operation Rolling Thunder US aircraft bomb targets in North Vietnam but avoid bombing Hanoi and the Soviet missile sites that surround the city.

16 June 1963-Soviet cosmonaut Valentina Tereshkova becomes the first woman in space aboard the space craft Vostok 6. Her flight lasts 71 hours and she made 48 orbits of earth. Up to this point she was in space on her one flight than all of the American astronauts combined.

18 June 1965-As part of Operation Arc Light, 28 B-52s for the first time bomb fly-bomb Viet Cong positions in an forested area of Binh Duong Province northwest of Saigon.

18 June 1972-A BEA Airlines Trident jetliner crashes shortly after take off from Heathrow Airport in London killing all 118 persons aboard. The cause of the crash to this day is still unknown, but official suggest that the plane may have been over loaded.

18 June 1983-Dr. Sally Ride becomes the first American woman in space board the Challenger space shuttle launched from Cape Canaveral, Florida. During Dr. Ride's first mission she was a mission specialist and operated the robot arm that she helped design.

19 June 1944-The Battle of the Philippine Sea takes place. In the first wave of the battle the Japanese lost well over 300 of their aircraft and one aircraft carrier. US forces lost only 29 aircraft. On the second wave the Japanese lost another 65 aircraft and one more carrier. The battle later became known as the "Marianas Turkey Shoot".

20 June 1943-British bombers for the first time perform "shuttle bombing" against steel construction sites in Friedrichshafen, German as part of Operation Bellicose. Unknown to the British was the fact that Friedrichshafen was also the majority part of the assembly of the V-2 rocket that was scheduled at an output of 300 per month.

20 June 1979-Under President Jimmy Carter, a solar energy system is installed at the White House.

21 June 1966-As part of Operation Rolling Thunder US aircraft strike against North Vietnamese petroleum storage facilities.

22 June 1906-Wife of Charles Lindbergh, Anne Marrow Lindbergh is born in Englewood, New Jersey.

22 June 1962-An Air France Boeing 707 crashes on the island of Guadeloupe, part of the French West Indies, killing all 113 persons aboard. The airport on the island of Guadeloupe is in a valley surrounded by mountains and requires a steep decent to land. The Air France flight did not make the decent correctly and crashed into a mountain peak called Dos D'Ane, the Donkey's Back.

23 June 1959-After serving only 9 years in prison, Klaus Fuchs is released from a British prison and leaves for East Germany to continue his research as a scientist. Fuchs was a Los Alamos scientist who leaked information of the atomic bomb to help the USSR build their own.

24 June 1915-German pilot Oswald Boelcke makes the first operational flight of the new Fokker Eindecker fighter plane. The Fokker Eindecker used a synchronization device so that the machine guns had the right timing to fire through the propellers without striking the blades. This became the new standard of fighter aircraft.

24 June 1975-An Eastern Airlines Boeing 727 from New Orleans crashes at JFK International Airport in Queens, New York. The cause of the crash of Flight 66 was a violent downburst. Of the 118 persons aboard the aircraft, only seven passengers and two flight attendants survived the crash.

26 June 1948-In response to blockades of land supply routes into West Berlin by the Soviets, US aircraft begin the Berlin Airlift. Over the next year 200,000 American planes from bases in England and West Germany flew around the clock to land in West Berlin. Over one and a half million tons of supplies were provided for the almost 2,000,000 inhabitants of West Berlin.

26 June 1972-As part of President Nixon's Vietnamization program, all fighter-bomber units are shifted from Vietnam to Thailand.

30 June 1971-Soviet cosmonauts Georgi Dobrovolsky, Vladislav Volkov and Viktor Patsayev perish aboard the space craft Soyuz 11 when the capsule they were in depressurized 100 miles above the Earth's surface. The three cosmonauts were the first crew of the world's first space station, Salyut 1.